1: Glacken E-5 (1951-1952) 1953 AC7 Okinawa AC7

HANS

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Hanashiro 5
Hinatogawa 9
Matsuda 16

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The Democratic Government of the Township and Village

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The description of local government has intentionally been delayed to this point because its operation and functions can be seen to greater advantage after an acquaintance with family life and the various forms of group activity. We can see it, not so much a formal structure to be described in legalistic terms, but as an expression of many of the characteristics of the culture we have already found in the family system, group activity, and individual leadership.

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Okinawa and the various smaller islands of the Central Ryukyus (Okinawa-gunto) is one of the four main political subdivisions of the chain. The gunto is divided into townships, and within each township, there are several settlements (buraku, ku, aza) which we have consistently called villages. Township government is the channel for the enforcement of laws and regulations from higher governmental agencies and the source of local measures which govern the several villages of the township.

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The seat of the township government is one of the villages of the township.[4] In Gushichan township, the village office (yakuba) is at Gushichan village, while in Ginoza township, the office is in Ginoza village.

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At the head of this government is a mayor (sonchō) elected for a four year term. There is no strenuous campaigning for the office. Friends may induce a well known man to run, then visit the villages, and ask the people to vote for him. A reputation for being kind, fair, and refined (otonashii) goes far in electing a man. Once in office he is extremely busy, and like the village headman, usually looks forward to the end of his term rather than to re-election. A new mayor appoints his own or reappoints the old staff. He chooses a vice-mayor (jōyaku) with the approval of the village assembly (gikai).

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A township office generally has the following administrative sections: (1) a treasury and disbursing office (shūnyūyaku), (2) a general affairs (shomu) sections. The head of this section is in charge of the family registers (koseki) and of the registry of seals. These two important functions require a little elaboration.

4 The government actually described here is that of Gushichan township. It did not seem worthwhile to repeat essentially the same information for Ginoza and then to make minute comparisons and contrasts between them.

1: Glacken E-5 (1951-1952) 1953 AC7 Okinawa AC7

Their acts are enforced in each of the villages by the headman. 632

The village headman (kuchō) is an intermediary between the people and the township government. He listens to complaints from his people, carries them to the township government for a hearing, and has supervision over official community projects and activities. The headman, like the mayor, is a busy, hardworking man. His pay, insufficient to live on, is midway between a salary and an honorarium. The headman of Hanashiro, for example, received ¥720 per month, Hinatogawa ¥950, and Hatsuda ¥2000 a month.[5] The headman usually has a paid clerk (shoki) who works full time and may receive more pay than the headman. The clerk compiles reports of the village population, assists the headman at meetings, and is a general administrative assistant.

The village headman is elected for a period of one year. There is no campaigning. The election generally is preceded by discussions among the heads of households, village elders, the young men's association and the women's association. These discussions reveal the candidates who are able to do the work and have the leisure and the money to undertake the responsibility.

A village headman usually leads a harried life. Most of them regard their term as a duty to be discharged rather than a beginning of a career in office holding. A former village headman of Hanashiro said that, in addition to the formal meetings he attended at the township office, he had to visit the village office at least 15 times a month on some village problem, such as taxes, health and sanitation, or individual complaints. The village headman of Hinatogawa had a constant succession of problems: reports on overdue fishermen, getting water pipe lines from the mountains to the water tank repaired, taking charge of typhoon damage repair, and trying to have small improvements made in the village. The headman is caught between the township officials who need tax money and the villagers who complain that they have so little money with which to pay them. In Hatsuda, there was the same multiplication of problems involving taxes, need for extra school supplies or repairs, and road maintenance.

Village headmen belong to no special age group. In one township, they ranged in age from 30 to 52. Age is not a decisive factor in their selection, but reputation, literacy, and friendliness are. Though there is a change in administration each year, the incumbent headman stays on one month after the close of his term until the new one has become accustomed to his duties. In some villages, the clerk is elected at the same time as the village headman.

The village headman does not have, nor does he desire, complete responsibility for administering the village. Two groups are available for advice. The headman will not make decisions on important non-routine matters without consulting them. The first of these, the village council 623

5 For comparative purposes, the minimum wage for young Okinawan girls employed as maids for US personnel was about ¥100 ($9.17) per month.

for keeping the population registry, with vital statistics and relevant information on all township residents.* The Welfare Department investigates relief cases and receives applications for support from the poorest families. The Health and Sanitation Administration is primarily concerned with preventive work. Representatives from these five departments are supposed to visit all the villages in the township frequently to inspect and to discuss regulations. The officials and personnel of the five departments are drawn equally from all the villages and commute daily by foot, bicycle, or bus.

The township administration links the central government and individual villages. Numerous requests for central government aid, originating in each community, are sent through the township office. The government in turn deals with each community through the township administration. Contact between township and the villages is maintained by weekly meetings of all village headmen with the mayor and his staff. The village headman is responsible for carrying out township and central government ordinances.

THE VILLAGE

The village headman is elected once a year, in June, from a slate agreed on beforehand during informal discussions by villagers. There is no campaigning; in fact, the elections are treated more as a necessity than a politically important event, and neither before nor after do they incite much public discussion. This democratic process of elections is of post-World War II date. Before the war, the council of village leaders accepted a new headman only if the choice pleased them, so that the headman at that time was virtually appointed. Villagers remarked that "listening to public opinion is a recent change."

The village is still experimenting with the mechanics of a free election. Votes are still restricted to household heads, but the Taira Women's Association and Young People's Association tried to change this in 1955. Although they did not succeed, a concession was made by permitting "representatives" to vote for their household in the absence of a household head, provided the voter was 20 years of age. The elec-

* The old registry was totally destroyed during the war. A new one is being prepared with the help of the people. It no longer differentiates between persons of noble and common descent. Information on crimes committed by people, sentences passed by courts, and other information, such as diseases in the family, like mental illness, is also omitted now.

666 tion itself is arranged and supervised by an *ad hoc* committee. In 1955 written ballots were cast and counted immediately so that the result was known within a few minutes after the last ballot was in.

622 In contrast to a position in the township administration, which carries high status, equivalent to that of a teacher, the village headman's job is considered a community service and carries little prestige. This does not mean that the headman should not be an individual of high qualities. He must be at least 25 years old; he has to have sufficient education, especially knowledge of Japanese writing characters, to read government documents and to do the required clerical work; he has to be a good accountant and must be proficient in working with the abacus, since all tax collections are supervised by him; he must be community minded and able to enforce regulations in a friendly but efficient way. The rewards are small, the salary less than that of most township officials. The office is held most frequently by young men who have not been out of high school too long. Most recent headmen are between 25 and 30 years of age. Serving in this office may mark the beginning of an administrative career, either in the township office, in the village store, or in business outside Taira. The clerk, appointed 624 by the headmen to assist in village administration, is also a young man. He too is likely to be headed toward an administrative career.

621 Each village is subdivided into wards, set up originally by Japanese
624 administration to effect greater control over families through the warden. He is a subagent of the headman, and at present he functions [203] mainly as a channel for communications, a useful function in a village like Taira, which covers a large geographical area. Regulations, village meetings, and special events are announced through the warden, and he is often called on to collect delinquent taxes. However, he has little authority and functions more as a neighbor who takes care of necessary contacts between residents and the village administration. Ward members elect him to his honorary office for a one-year term.

623 Village affairs are discussed and legislative action concerning the village initiated by the village council. This group is now partly elected, partly composed of holders of essential offices, such as heads of associations, members of the township assembly, and township officials who live in Taira. The 26 members of the Council are responsible for measures affecting the community, and the headman relies heavily on their advice. Most councilmen are middle aged; few are over 50 years [575] old. Since the head of the Women's Association and the nurse are members, there are at least two female representatives. The youngest councilman is usually the head of the Young People's Association.

623 It is apparent that leadership in the community is always exercised
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2:Maretzki & Maretzki E-5 (1954;1955) 1963 AC7 Okinawa AC7
Taira

the wife takes charge of household funds while her husband controls larger spendings.

Many quarrels between couples originate from financial matters. Disagreements happen frequently when a husband returns home intoxicated late at night. His wife may blame him for using money which she has put aside for a special purchase; from this incident the argument turns to family finances in general. As words become more heated, the woman holds her own, telling her husband in no uncertain terms that he is a squanderer. Some husbands settle such an argument by hitting their wives.

Decisions are seldom made by one person in the family. The more important the issue involved, the more people within the family are consulted. A husband and wife may discuss whether to buy or sell a pig and make a joint decision. They also decide mutually on the buying of seed rice and other agricultural matters. Men concern themselves with the building of new structures or the addition to old ones. On the other hand, women make decisions affecting the daily life of children. They determine if a child needs new clothes, if he should be taken to the doctor, or accompany the mother on a shopping trip to the city. Some fathers take an interest in their children's study habits and accomplishments at school, but few are consistent in supervising their children in this respect. Here, too, mothers seem to have a much greater influence. Girls are likely to receive even less attention from their fathers than boys. In cases of decisions that can vitally affect the future of the whole household, members of the husband's and wife's family, if they live in the village, gather to discuss plans.

Although women are less active politically than men, they participate in village meetings as representatives for their families. With the exception of the Women's Association leaders, their participation is more passive than that of the men. But although they seldom speak in public and sit together at the back of the meeting, women nevertheless exert a great deal of influence on community affairs. Their influence is felt even more in meetings of mutual finance associations.

It is unlikely at this point that a woman in the village would run for political office. Several recent developments, however, indicate a steady increase in their political participation. The headman who was elected to office in 1955 is responsible for an innovation which reflects this trend. He selected his clerk by means of a competitive examination which was open to both young men and young women. Two girls who had graduated from high school were among the candidates. They were defeated by a young man to whom the job was given because of

2:Maretzki & Maretzki E-5 (1954-1955) 1963 AC7 Okinawa AC7
Taira

562 his high score. Under American influence, universal suffrage and
666 equal representation have been introduced and formally adopted in some village affairs, although the household head vote—traditionally mostly male—is still maintained in many cases.

562 The Women's Association is the main force behind the attempts to
575 give women greater equality. The spokesmen for this group do not proclaim equality for women as such as the important goal but express hopes that women's life can be made easier by reducing their work load and providing more conveniences for them, such as better stoves. Attempts are made to give a woman more time to spend at home instead of in forests or fields and to reduce the expenses involved in preparing for holidays and special celebrations. The opinions of the Women's Association carry weight in village affairs. This, as one old woman pointed out, is a considerable change from earlier times. There had been a Women's Association before the war, but
[623] women were still barred from participation in village meetings at that time, and the only place where they could make themselves heard in village matters was at the meeting of the individuals required to do periodic labor for the village.

562 The situation at the time of fieldwork with regard to the attempts
527 of women to gain more recognition and the role which men play in
575 this respect is illustrated by a celebration of Mother's Day—an event
[177] which came to Taira quite recently from the outside. The women decided to observe it by taking off from their daily duties during the afternoon. The Women's Association made all arrangements, so that it was not a day dedicated by children or adult men to the mothers, but a day that the mothers celebrated themselves. Nevertheless, for the meeting at the old warehouse, where mats had been spread and food prepared, there were also tables arranged for the male village officials, such as the headman, village council members, and the policeman. They started the affair by treating the women to a few speeches in which the importance of motherhood was eulogized by such observations as: "A man can be great only if he has a mother who is making him great," and (from the policeman): "Mothers are an important factor in preventing juvenile delinquency." After this initial hour-long introduction, the leader of the Women's Association declared that festivities could now begin and that she "did not care how much sake the women drank as long as they were happy on this day." The children, who had been told by their teachers to help their mothers on this day by cleaning house and freeing them from some of their chores, gathered near the building, received some feast food and played as usual, and men—with the exception of the invited officials—worked

The yard in which the Okinawan home stands is also rather uniform in its appearance. It is usually surrounded by a stone wall or a thick hedge for protection against winds. Inside the gate is a himpung, a short wall that prevents one from looking straight through the gate into the house. The space between the himpung and the house is hard earth; this is where mats are spread for drying grain and where many other household tasks are performed. This yard space may be lined on one or both sides with outbuildings for the storage of tools and crops and for housing livestock---two or three goats, and here and there an ox or a horse. Behind the house is a pigsty. There may also be a chicken-coop, but chickens often run loose. There are usually a few trees in the yard, often a clump of bananas. Behind the house is also the toilet; formerly it was combined with the pigsty, but now it is usually an oil-drum. In many villages every house has its own well, but even where wells are fewer there is almost sure to be a cistern beside the house to catch rain-water. The house and yard will be discussed again later in relation to sanitation and health (see Chapter IX).[1]

The social unit that occupies such a house and yard is the family. The structure of the family is also dealt with in detail by Pitts in Chapter VII. Let it suffice to say here that ideally the first son stays with his parents after his marriage while younger sons establish separate households. Thus the family consists of a couple and their unmarried children or a couple with a married first son, his wife and children, and his unmarried brothers and sisters. The deaths of one or more members may reduce the family without breaking it up. Two married couples, parents and grandparents of the youngest generation, is the usual maximum. If two married sons live under the same roof it is usually regarded as a temporary expedient. Thus while the total number of persons in the household may be as many as a dozen, the average number is a little less than five.

The family, that is, the members of the household, is an economic unit, a social unit, and a ceremonial unit. As an economic unit the members of a household work together, producing for and consuming from a common stock. They cooperate with other households on the basis of common interest as neighbors. They form a social unit within the "han", the "ku", and the "son", they are registered as a unit in the "koseki", and may have only one vote---cast by the head of the house---in local elections. As a ceremonial unit they form part of a numbered and graded system based on common descent.

The Structure of Kinship Relations In traditional Okinawan society, as in other societies of East Asia, the fundamental unit is the family and the basic axis within the family is a vertical one running through the male line, the father-oldest son axis.[2] The basic values that support this structure are unity and continuity. Individuals are of varying importance to the family depending on their closeness to the father-first son axis; females are less important than males; younger sons

[1] For a more detailed account of the house and yard see Glacken, 1953, Chapter 5.

[2] I have borrowed this concept from Francis L. K. Hsu, to whose writings I am indebted.

613 southern part of the island. There the term for the local unit, a relatively small lineage with not very strong ties to the larger unit, is chuchooree (literally, "one brotherhood', to translate literally into Japanese, hito-
613 kyōdai). The larger unit of the commoners is called the ichimung ("one gate"),
614 which is equivalent to the munchu of the south. Some of the gentry families refer to the subdivision of the uji having the same surname as their ichimung. Thus a family may belong to a local chuchooree, to an ichimung containing other families elsewhere of the same surname, and to a still larger uji containing ichimung of other surnames.

614 Functions The functions of the common descent group seem to be almost
761 entirely ritual. Just as the members of a family are responsible for helping the head of the family in making the proper offerings before the tablets and the tomb of its immediate ancestors, so the larger unit has such a responsibility toward the remote ancestors. In the family the eldest son bears the greatest responsibility, so in the common descent group the head of the main house bears the greatest responsibility. But the benefits resulting from proper worship and the misfortunes resulting from negligence may extend even to the youngest branch house, and thus all are interested in maintaining the worship.

614 Representatives of the common descent group worship before the ances-
796 tral tablets at the main house on occasions called u-machii (J. 'o-matsuri'),
769 usually the 15th days of the 2nd, 5th and 6th lunar months and during the New Year's season. They worship at the tomb at the shiimii (J. 'seimei') season in April. For this purpose periodic meetings may be held and dues levied for
[789] the expense of the offerings. Many groups send members on pilgrimages every seventh year (shichinin-maari) to pray at remote shrines; many in the south go to Nakijin in the north for this. There may also be special expenditures such as for the repair of a tomb, the building of a new tomb, or even the repair of the main house if its owner has become impoverished.

614 A few common descent groups are said to have a little property from which the income is used for the expense of the worship, but probably none has enough to be of any other value. The common descent group probably has
[476] no economic functions. In a rural community its members may tend to cooperate a little more in farm work; I observed this to be the case in some instances in Yamada, but informants say that kinship is no more important than closeness of residence and that neighbors ought to cooperate.

614 Nevertheless the common descent group occasionally seems to have
• 666 political functions. In a recent election in southern Okinawa, munchu membership became a factor. A cartoon that appeared in the Okinawa Times of 8 March 1954 shows opposing candidates carrying banners announcing their munchu. In the village of Komesu, south of Itoman, supporters of candidates appealed to members of their candidates' munchu to support their own regardless of political party.

613 The unity of the kin group may appear in time of crisis. In the vil-
722 lage of Yamada, during the battle in 1945, many of the villagers hid out in improved natural caves. According to one informant's account, at first there was some moving around but ultimately people of the same chuchooree clung together. In one instance bad feeling arose between two groups over the sharing of a cave.

632 423 [651] The Land Affairs Department maintains the land ownership records ('tochi daichō') and issues certificates of land title ('chiken'). The head of this department ('tochijimuchō' or 'tochi gakari') together with the village mayor ('kuchō') and his council assesses land values for tax purposes.

632 744 The Departments of Public Welfare and Social Affairs are concerned with matters relating to relief, health, sanitation, etc. The functions of these overlap somewhat with those of the police and the Naha Health Center. One day each month a nurse from the Health Center is at the township office giving shots to children. Once a month there is a sanitation inspection of all the villages within the 'son'; the emphasis shifts each month---thus, one month it may be for mosquito control and the next it may be extermination of flies. Relief measures are also handled from these departments.

632 178 A 'son' assembly ('senkai' or 'songikai') functions as the legislative branch of 'son' government; it is empowered to enact local ordinances, approve the mayor's selection of employees for the village office, and make local tax levies. In Kanegusuku-son each of the eight villages selects two representatives ('sonkaigiin') for the assembly, and the term of office is four years. Before the end of the war this body was an appointive one selected by the mayors of the villages ('kuchō'); in turn the assembly appointed the township mayor. The bulk of the population had no voice in local government; today, however, both the mayor and the assembly stand for election. In all elections [664] for municipal and central government offices universal suffrage now obtains; all those twenty and above are entitled to vote.

632 622 The meetings of the 'son' assembly are too infrequent to provide effective representation at all times for the people. Regular contact between the people and the township office is maintained by frequent meetings of all the village mayors ('kuchō') with the township mayor ('sonchō'). This group, known as 'kuchokai' (village mayors' assembly), meets three times each month generally on the fifth, fifteenth, and twenty-fifth, though in times of emergency or pressing business it may meet oftener. Problems of general concern to the villages are discussed. These meetings enable the township mayor to keep in touch with the problems of the villages and what the people are thinking; they also provide the opportunity to inform and instruct the village mayors regarding directives or projects to be carried out in the villages.

632 651 One of the chief functions of the township government is to collect taxes for the central government and for its own needs. The following township taxes ('senzei', or in legal terminology, 'chihōzei') are those levied by Kanegusuku-son:

senmin-zei	Villagers' Tax. This is a head tax on all persons who are able to work between the ages of 17 and 60 excluding students, blind, sick, and crippled persons.
tochi-zei	Land Tax. For details see chapter on Land Tenure.
fudōsan shutoku-zei	Real Estate Acquisition Tax.
kaoku-zei	House or Building Tax.

One of h[illegible] major responsibilities to the township office is tax collection within the village; yet, his actual powers are slight, as nearly all of his official acts are first sanctioned by the villagers or the township office. It seemed to the author that the chief role of the 'kuchō' was as an intermediary between the people and the township office or as an agent for the latter, rather than as an administrator. It would seem that the payment of his salary by the township instead of by the village is symbolic of his actual role. 622 [651] [632]

Assisting the 'kuchō' are several officers the first of which is the assistant mayor ('fuku-kuchō') who is elected at the same time as the mayor and serves for one year. He is paid ¥480 ($4.00) per month, and like the mayor he must be over 27 and a household head. In the absence of the mayor he functions in his place, and on all other occasions he assists him in his work. A village clerk ('shōki') is also elected at the same time as the 'kuchō', and serves for a term of one year; he is paid a salary of ¥700 ($5.83) each month. The main qualifications for this position are that one have a fair amount of education and a good mastery of characters for writing. The job holds little appeal since it demands much of the individual's time and affords little in the way of prestige or pay. In Kanegusuku-ku in December of 1953 three elections were held in an effort to fill this position before someone finally and quite reluctantly accepted it. 624 [465] [465]

An advisory body of four councillors ('hyōgiin') assists the mayor in his administration; they represent each of the four neighborhoods or districts of the village. They are elected at the same time as the mayor, serve for one year, and receive a salary of ¥20 (17¢) per meeting. According to the villagers this body has replaced the earlier yuushi which was an unelected advisory council made up of former village officials, the village equivalent of elder statesmen. The 'kuchō' never undertakes an independent course of action; he first consults the'hyōgiin' and obtains their approval and suggestions before initiating action. 623 [465]

Each village of Kanegusuku-son elects two men to represent it in the township ('son') assembly ('sonkai'); they are elected for a term of four years. Older, mature men who have held several official positions are always selected. They also play a part in village administration and are considered village officials. At all meetings they sit with the officials, and their opinion is much valued. 624 632

All matters of real importance are submitted to the household heads who form the real body politic within the village. The electorate for the village consists exclusively of household heads; to vote in a village election one must be a household head or one appointed by him to vote in his place, but in township and national elections universal suffrage obtains. At one village election which the author witnessed in December of 1953 balloting began as soon as the meeting was called to order without any preliminary speeches or nominations. It was later stated that the election and likely candidates had been informally discussed among the village leaders and household heads so that there was no need for preliminaries. The same situation seemed to prevail when meetings were held to discuss matters of general concern; the apparent unanimity of opinion and agreement indicated that informal concordance had been reached well in advance of formal discussion and decision. 621 592 666

625 high esprit. A policeman's salary is high when compared to that of other government workers and the general public; in addition the job has other advantages such as a uniform and free transportation on public conveyances.

621 625 In rural areas there seems to be some resentment over what is considered to be high pay and special privileges for policemen; this was particularly true where the local policeman was not a native son. In one of the more isolated villages of northern Okinawa, a community which is noted for and prides itself on its strong community spirit, there was some irritation with what they felt to be an unnecessary presence of a policeman (not native to the village) in their midst. The village 'kuchō' and several villagers assured the author that the village was a most peaceful one, everyone cooperated well together, and there was never any stealing or violence. They were also resentful of the fact that the village supplied the policeman with free food and charcoal and that his pay, nevertheless, was about equal to that of their highly respected school principal.

875 625 554 It should be noted that whenever the low pay of teachers was mentioned the correspondingly high pay of the police was cited. The teacher traditionally has been venerated in this culture, and it is held that the teacher is a better-educated person and should, therefore, receive a higher salary, as was the case before the war. In the past the higher positions in the bureaucracy were accorded or ideally should be accorded those with better educations, and since both the policeman and the teacher are civil government employees, the present situation with regard to their respective salaries seems unjust.

625 829 Most people express the belief that the police are honest and conscientious though their high pay may be resented. A number of people observed that the police are much better under the American military administration than they were under the Japanese government before the war, in that they are more polite and less officious today. Under present laws the powers of the police have been clearly defined to insure that they will not violate the rights of individuals as was frequently done in the past. Not a few Okinawans will contend that this curbing of police power while probably democratic has encouraged an increase in crime in recent years. The traditional attitude toward the policeman seems to be a mixture of fear and respect, and mothers frequently use the threat to call a policeman as a means of disciplining a child who misbehaves.

4. Political Participation by Women

562 [666] Since the end of the war universal suffrage has been introduced into Okinawan political life. The enfranchisement of women has not brought with it a surge of political activity on their part. It is now theoretically possible for a woman to hold public office, but in actuality none to date has been elected to a national or municipal office. One woman declared herself a candidate for the Ryukyuan legislature in 1954 but later withdrew from the campaign shortly before election time. In the rural areas political participation by women is even more limited. The men in the village of Kanegusuku laugh when the subject of women in politics is mentioned; they say

621 among its membership, and all relationships are highly structured. Though
592 age-grades tend to structure the membership of the community, this is not
[561] too important, as the basic unit within the village is the family, not the individual. The community is regarded as an association of families
[565] bound together in a relationship of equality. Such differences as exist
178 in wealth and land holdings are not so great as to constitute class differentiation; likewise the old Okinawan class structure is no longer of any real significance, and in most rural communities the bulk of the families were and still are of commoner descent.

621 The concept of political participation by households is basic to
829 the thinking of the villagers. Universal suffrage applies only to munic-
592 ipal and national elections; within the village active political partici-
666 pation is restricted to household heads functioning in the capacity of representatives for their respective families. When the mayor of one village was asked why all adults were not allowed to vote in village elections, his quick reply was, "Is it democracy to give some families more votes merely because they have more members?"

6. Political Leadership and Authority

621 There are nine important political offices within the village of Kanegusuku (population 507)---mayor, assistant mayor, clerk, 4 councillors,
[592] and 2 'son' assemblymen. Eighteen of the 108 village families are headed by women, and since only male household heads are elected to positions of political leadership, there remain 90 men eligible for these offices. A number of the young household heads also must be excluded from this group since a man must be over twenty-seven to be eligible, and there are others who are too old or infirm. This leaves 72 men eligible for office on the basis of the formal requirements.

621 Actually the villagers apply several other qualifications which one
554 must possess in order to be eligible for office. In practice the repatriates and the other newcomers to the village since the end of the war are not elected. Those who are poor (less than enough land for mere subsistence) cannot afford to accept an office, since the pay is low and the demands on one's time are too great. The men who have non-agricultural jobs which take them outside the village each day also do not have the time to devote, and the villagers tend to feel that these men are out of touch with the problems of a farming village. Lastly there are several men who otherwise meet all qualifications for village office save for what the villagers vaguely describe as "good character"; the most frequently cited example for this group is a man who dislikes farming and spends much of his time drinking or visiting the 'pachinko' parlor in a nearby town. Thus, the total number qualified for political office on the basis of all criteria which are applied is limited to approximately 47 individuals; this group, which constitutes about 9% of the total population, supplies the village leadership and forms the core of the body politic.

582 178 average age at the time of marriage, investigation into the registries reveals that the range has narrowed somewhat. Formerly some girls married at thirteen and fourteen; today this would be considered rather unusual.

[177] The Japanese administration attempted to discourage endogamous marriage practices, particularly kin-group endogamy. All agreed that the practice has declined; yet in Kanegusuku nearly 50% of all marriages were within the kin group and 66% of all marriages were within the village. An analysis of these figures on an age basis indicates the practice is declining there.

833 178 843 Sex It is said that sexual standards have changed in that there is less sexual license among the young people and that they tend to have their first relations at a later age than formerly. This is attributed in part to the moral training of the schools. Another factor seems to be the general decline of several informal village institutions which permitted young people considerable sexual freedom. One informant stated that those who continue on to high school and university generally have their first experience at a later age than those who attend only junior high school.

642 177 641 Government The Japanese introduced a modern system of government, abolished the Okinawan aristocracy, and granted suffrage to all males of twenty-five or more years. The American Civil Administration has attempted to liberalize laws and to make possible a greater degree of self-government. [625] Police powers have been limited, universal suffrage has been introduced, and [666] the number of elected officials has been increased.

621 178 To date there has been little change within the village, where suffrage and office-holding remain limited to household heads. Villagers acknowledge that there is greater freedom for action at the local level today; yet they are not desirous of obtaining greater self-government. They feel that it would require too much of their time and that there is too little money available to finance its operation. Village leadership is virtually unchanged. Change where it has occurred has been initiated at a higher level.

632 178 At the township level the electorate has been broadened to include all persons, male and female, over twenty years of age. The mayor who was formerly appointed is now elected to office.

791 177 178 793 Religion There has been a general decline in the indigenous Okinawan religion, effected by Japanese policy, wartime attrition, and the spread of education. Formerly a hierarchy of priestesses extended from the kin group through the community and region to the person of the king's sister, the chief priestess. The Japanese removed the top echelons of this hierarchy, but the kin group and community priestesses continued to function. World War II resulted in the death of many religious functionaries, and as the office is usually hereditary within a specific family and often limited to a particular member of that family, there has often been no replacement for the office. Lastly there is an increasing tendency among the young people, due to the influence of the school, to regard religion as superstition.

796 178 Many villages, especially those without religious functionaries, have discontinued all village ceremonies, and in those few remarkable exceptions